

## Michigan Waterfront Alliance Update for Friday, June 19, 2020



**Michigan Waterfront Alliance** (MWA) is a 501(c) 4 non-profit corporation formed over twenty years ago in order to effectively advocate for the creation or preservation of state laws and/or policies designed to protect, preserve, and promote the sustainable and wise use of our state's immense treasure of high quality freshwater resources. Our primary mission will be accomplished by pro-active participation in Michigan's legislative process (lobbying), by participating in court cases whose outcomes may have significant statewide ramifications, and/or by direct involvement with natural resources management, or environment focused state agencies or departments.

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### **Michigan Waterfront Alliance Proposes to Conduct Two Presentations During the Upcoming Michigan Inland Lakes Convention by Bob Frye, President, Michigan Waterfront Alliance**

Legal Aspects of the Public Trust Doctrine as it Pertains to Michigan's Lakes and Streams

Conference attendees will be apprised of their legal rights under the Michigan Environmental Protection Act and Public Trust Doctrine by noted attorney-at-law Bill Carey of the firm Carey & Jaskowski PLLC and Dane Carey of the Law firm of Kuhn Rogers PLC.

This session is intended to provide an overview of the legal remedies that can be used to compel a response to the misuse of water rights in the State of Michigan. An example being the Nestle water withdraws in the Reed City area. The discussion will focus on the viability of bringing a legal action against the abusers of water rights to prevent the resulting environmental impairment.

## An Update on Critical Aspects of the Forty Year Starry Stonewort Bio-Invasion

Workshop attendees will receive an overview of the natural history, biology, morphology, reproductive capacity, the eco-physiological prerequisites of starry stonewort as well as a review of the number and distribution of inland lakes and other water bodies in Michigan that have been invaded by starry stonewort. The three hour session will also feature presentations regarding on-going efforts to develop bio-chemical means of effectively controlling the highly invasive macro-alga species, in addition to a presentation by the manager of the Finger Lakes Institute [Starry Stonewort Collaborative](#), an EPA funded project intended to assist water resource managers and aquatic biologists in the Great Lakes region in developing exotic invasive starry stonewort specific management strategies.

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### Michigan Waterfront Alliance Votes to Support the 2020 Michigan Inland Lakes Convention at the 'Platinum' Level

Recognizing the overall importance of pro-actively supporting the on-going efforts of the [Michigan Inland Lakes Partnership](#), a statewide collaborative organization dedicated to protecting our state's vast heritage of high quality inland lakes by advancing stewardship, the Officers and Directors of Michigan Waterfront Alliance are pleased to announce that they recently unanimously voted to help enable the upcoming 2020 Michigan Inland Lakes Convention by being a 'platinum' level supporter. The [Michigan Inland Lakes Convention](#) is a biennial event that brings together lake management professionals, researchers, local government officials, lake enthusiasts, and others interested in protecting Michigan's water resources.

In addition to providing financial support to the [Convention](#), Michigan Waterfront Alliance has also elected to support the inland lake focused event by submitting three distinct proposals for speaker presentations. For more information regarding the topics of our proposed speaker presentations, please read President Bob Frye's article that appears at the top of this edition of our newsletter.

Scheduled to occur on **Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>**, this year's [Convention](#) will occur in a virtual format due to the significant public health concerns currently being posed by the novel corona virus pandemic. To learn more about the upcoming 2020 Michigan Inland Lakes Convention, visit the convention dedicated web page by [clicking here](#), or review the promotion for the Convention that appears within this e-newsletter.



[michiganwaterfrontalliance.com](http://michiganwaterfrontalliance.com)



## **A Steadily Increasing Number of Wake Boats Operating on Michigan's Inland Waters Are Rendering Damage to Shallow Water Habitat and to Developed and Natural Shorelines**

**by Scott Brown, Michigan Waterfront Alliance Board Member**

A dramatic upsurge in the number of wake boats operating on Michigan's inland waters has resulted in a significant escalation in reports of overturned kayaks, swamped fishing boats, and damage to both developed and natural shorelines. The increasingly alarming situation has not only elicited the intense anger of affected waterfront property owners, paddle boat enthusiasts, and fisherman but it has also helped attract the attention of local, county, and state government officials to an increasingly important water resource management issue. A sharp increase in sales of the extraordinarily powerful and frequently disruptive boats that are capable of generating wakes whose energy greatly exceeds those that occur naturally as a result of high winds has served to bring the contentious issue to the forefront of public debate.

Based upon the findings of recent studies of the potential ecological impacts of wake boating conducted on inland lakes located in the province of Quebec, by an "average of a factor of four times", wakes generated by near shore wake boat passes induced a significant increase in the level of energy reaching vulnerable shorelines. Moreover, a study of the impact of wake boat operation on critical shallow water habitat also conducted on the lakes of Quebec, revealed that high levels of turbulence associated with wake boat operation and their high energy wakes is capable of re-suspending bottom sediments, damaging aquatic plants, and of disturbing critical fish habitat situated in depths of up to fifteen feet. Lake managers, aquatic biologists, and conservationists throughout Michigan and the Great Lakes region are increasingly aware of the fact that frequent exposure to the high energy waves generated by wake sport enabling boats is likely to be having a long-term negative impact on a steadily escalating number of vulnerable inland lakes and other ecologically sensitive aquatic ecosystems.

Michigan Waterfront Alliance would greatly appreciate you sharing your experiences with the negative consequences of near shore wake boat operation with your local law enforcement agency as well as with your respective state representative and senator.

To view a webinar dedicated to exploring the destructive influences of wake boat operation that was produced by the Maine Lakes Society, [click here](#). Thanks to Dr. Jo Latimore of MSU Extension for sharing this webinar link!

## **Michigan Waterfront Alliance Seeks a Viable and Sustainable Means of Funding the Management and Control of Aquatic Invasive Species**

Primarily attributed to the overland transport of small-craft boats, recreational boaters are known to play a key role in the unintentional introduction of an increasingly diverse array of often harmful exotic aquatic invasive plant and animal species within thousands of public boating accessible inland lakes in Michigan. A multitude of problems associated with the introduction of aquatic invasive species have been compounded by the fact that neither the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or the Department of the Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) are presently capable of providing any level of funding assistance to lakefront communities striving to protect valuable public natural resources from the deleterious influences of exotic species. In the absence of state funding, or other viable funding options, lake associations and township officials are therefore left little choice but to work together in order to deploy [Public Act 188](#), the Township Public Improvements Act, that provides township officials with the means to assess inland lake property owners for the cost of managing or controlling aquatic invasive species (AIS).

Recognizing the inadequacy and unfairness associated with Michigan's only AIS funding mechanism, Michigan Waterfront Alliance is pro-actively seeking to establish a viable and sustainable means of stakeholder-based funding that would permit recreational boaters to voluntarily contribute to funding earmarked for aquatic invasive species management. Rather than supporting an outright increase in boater registration fees, Michigan Waterfront Alliance is working pro-actively in Lansing to promote the creation of a donation check-off box that would allow recreational boaters to voluntarily contribute funds to support AIS management efforts during the once every three-year process of registering their water craft with the Michigan Secretary of State.

The efforts of Michigan Waterfront Alliance are supported by the findings of a number of academic research projects, including recent [Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center](#) sponsored research that strongly suggests that the majority of the public stakeholders of our inland lakes, primarily recreational boaters, would in fact be willing to contribute more in terms of resource user fees, for example, in order to support enhanced funding of programs designed to prevent, manage, and control exotic aquatic invasive species.



# 2020 Michigan Inland Lakes Convention

## Conserving Lakes in a Changing Environment



### Join us!

The Michigan Inland Lakes Convention takes place every two years, and serves lake enthusiasts, researchers, managers, and educators. The Convention is hosted by the [Michigan Inland Lakes Partnership](#), a collaboration of diverse organizations with a common mission to advance stewardship of Michigan's inland lakes. We invite you to join us online, September 16-18, to learn and share the latest innovations and ideas in lake stewardship, and to network with others who share your passion for lakes! This year's theme is "**Conserving Lakes in a Changing Environment**".

### Going Virtual in 2020

The 2020 [Michigan Inland Lakes Convention](#) has been moved to a virtual format. The novel corona virus has greatly impacted the way we work and live, and we are adapting our Convention to match the fluid environment of our lives during this pandemic. Though we realize there is huge value to the in-person networking that takes place between sessions, we must prioritize the safety and health of our participants, partners, sponsors, volunteers, and staff. The new format also has some major benefits, such as the ability to reach a much larger audience, archived presentations that will be available to the public, and significantly decreased cost. Registration fees will be dramatically reduced relative to a face-to-face event: \$30 all-inclusive for 3 days, \$15 for speakers, and FREE for students! These nominal registration fees will support technical and administrative costs and cover student participation.

### Call for Exhibitors

Non-profit organizations, agencies, and academic/Extension programs are invited to share their work, programs, and resources with lake enthusiasts, managers, educators, and researchers during the virtual Convention. While the call for presentation abstracts is closed, you can still request to be featured on the Convention website.

Contact [Julia Kirkwood](#), Convention Co-Chair, to provide a link or PDF file. **Deadline: July 15.**

### Call for Contributors

We invite your business or organization to support the virtual Michigan Inland Lakes Convention. Join the organizations, agencies, and businesses that are helping advance stewardship of our inland lakes through learning, networking, and exchange of ideas. Even in a virtual format, your contribution will help support technical and administrative costs as well as scholarships to support student participation. Review our [Contributor Opportunities](#) for a description of available options. **Deadline: August 15.**

### Convention Contacts

You are welcome to direct any questions you have about the 2020 Convention to its Co-Chairs: [Julia Kirkwood](#) of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, or [Jo Latimore](#) of Michigan State University. You can also subscribe to the Michigan Inland Lakes Partnership [email list](#), or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#) (Convention hashtag: **#MILC2020**).

To learn more about the 2020 Michigan Inland Lakes Convention or to submit an abstract, visit the convention dedicated web page by [clicking here](#).



**Did you know that a very high percentage of every dollar made available to MWA goes directly to pay for our efforts in Lansing to pass legislation that benefits Michigan's water resources and the interests of waterfront property owners?**

**Only You Can Help Amplify the Power of Our Collective Voice in Lansing By Becoming a Member and/or by Making a Generous Donation to Michigan Waterfront Alliance !**

By becoming an Individual, Association, or Corporate member of Michigan Waterfront Alliance, and/or by making a donation to our non-profit organization, you will be contributing to enhancing our ability to help preserve and protect our extraordinary treasure of freshwater resources. The fact is, a very large percentage of the funds generated by membership dues and your generous donations are utilized by our organization to fund our capacity to effectively lobby the state legislature on behalf of protecting Michigan's freshwater resources, and the unique interests of our member waterfront communities. In the coming year, for example, Michigan Waterfront Alliance will be engaged in intensive lobbying efforts focused on encouraging our state legislature to (finally!) create a sustainable revenue source with which to fund the management of an increasingly destructive array of aquatic invasive species that continue to invade and degrade our inland lakes, streams, and wetlands. Our lobbying efforts will also focus on restricting the operation of wake boats to areas of large lakes that will help ensure that shorelines and critical shallow water habitat are not damaged or destroyed. As a founding member and key partner in the Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force, [Michigan Waterfront Alliance](#) will also continue to work on a collaborative basis in 2020 with the [DNR Parks and Recreation Division](#), and the [Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy](#) to develop and implement new programs and initiatives intended to prevent or minimize the spread of aquatic invasive plants and animals.

Please consider becoming a member, and/or of donating to Michigan Waterfront Alliance!

[Click here](#) to visit our Membership page.

[Click here](#) to visit our Donation page.

[michiganwaterfrontalliance.com](http://michiganwaterfrontalliance.com)